

Mr. Walker has influenced future musicians through his work by teaching recording at the Kansas Vocational Technical Center and as an adjunct professor at Memphis State University. Through running his own record label, Strick 9, he helped advance the musical careers of many contemporary Memphis musicians, including Academy Award winning group Three 6 Mafia.

Cato Walker has touched the lives of many and influenced a great variety of musicians from the 1970s to today. Mr. Walker will be remembered forever in the heart of not just his family and friends, but also Memphians and musicians everywhere. He is survived by his wife, VanEsta Walker, two sons, Tondtrict Dixon, and Dietrich Dixon, stepson, Ahmed Jenkins, stepdaughter, Angela Cunningham, and sisters, Lora Walker, Thelma Brim and Joanna Brown. His was a life well lived.

A TRIBUTE TO DAVID RONALD REED, SR.: AN AMERICAN ORIGINAL

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2011

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to acknowledge the loss of a gifted man who loved his country, his family, and his fellow man and who, throughout his life, moved seamlessly through diverse cultural and political communities all with a focus on making our country a better place to live. I'm speaking of my dear friend and former political colleague, David Ronald Reed, Sr., whose life on Earth ended on March 4, 2011. David's legacy, however, lives on through his dear wife, Judith Reed, and the family and friends he leaves behind throughout our nation. David spent the early part of his life in Chicago and the political footprint he left in our city and state still resonates in the lives of thousands of grateful Chicagoans and others, throughout our state, whose lives he touched during an important time in the rise of African-Americans and other progressive communities in the State of Illinois.

I first got to know David by observing his friendship with my brother, Fred. Aside from their friendship and their competitive spirits, I watched this brilliant man look at problems and see opportunities. David's quick mind and determination to succeed led him to step way beyond the cultural and political boundaries that, in the 1960s, so often defined the life experience of middle-class African-Americans.

David was born in Chicago, Illinois, on February 20, 1941. He was educated in the Chicago Public Schools where he attended Willard Elementary School and DuSable High School. While a student at DuSable, David honed his skills as an accomplished basketball player. Upon graduation from DuSable in 1959, his skills on the basketball court allowed him to gain a full basketball scholarship to Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. While at Drake, David became a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. He graduated from Drake University in 1964 with a Bachelors of Science degree in Political Science.

David returned to Chicago where all that he had learned—in the classroom and on the basketball courts—would serve him well in the

rough and tumble world of Chicago politics. After graduating from college, David worked for People's Gas Light & Coke Company for almost two years until his entry into politics in 1966.

While for the better part of his life David was a Democrat, he first came to prominence on the national stage as a young, 25-year-old Republican. Like many African-American youth in the 1960s, David and a talented group of his friends chafed at some of the old guard, "machine" politics of Illinois' Democratic Party. In response, David and some of his friends formed a political group, the "New Breed Committee," that represented forward thinking African-American youth. Only months after they were formed, their brilliance and boldness of spirit captured the hearts and minds of a whole new generation of young African-American political activists, including me.

In 1966, in what was then a stunning political move that inspired me and so many other young people who believed in America's political process, 25-year-old David Reed—who, as a community activist, was admired in Chicago's black community for his brilliance, his organizing skills, his articulate speech, and his comfort in speaking truth to power—responded to a call from, then, candidate for the U.S. Senate, Charles Percy, to switch from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party! It was a strategically inspired move aimed at defeating the intransigent political forces of the long-time incumbent Congressman William L. Dawson and other factions of the Democratic machine. Shortly after David filed as a "New Breed" Democratic challenger to Dawson, Percy's senate campaign reached out to David and his supporters. Illinois' statewide Republican Party recognized David's passion and the opportunity to help elevate a younger generation of African-Americans while also boosting Republican Party fortunes—in Illinois and across the nation. Percy and leaders of his political organization appealed to David and his forces and told him he'd have a better opportunity to unseat Dawson if he joined the Republican ticket. David and his supporters agreed and they folded the "New Breed Committee" into the Republican Party's political apparatus. And the result was electric!

While David's candidacy ultimately fell short, David was part of a broader trend among African-American voters, in 1966, that led to some of the largest gains by the national Republican Party among black voters in a generation. Not only did Percy win his first campaign for the U.S. Senate that year, but 1966 was the year the U.S. Senate gained its first African-American Senator in a generation. Edward Brooke, from Massachusetts, became the first African-American to be elected to the Senate since reconstruction. Although David lost his election contest, Percy and others in Illinois' Republican Party recognized his talent. Only weeks after the election, David became one of the first, top leadership appointments by the Republican President of the Cook County Board, Richard V. Ogilvie.

David's leadership exploits brought national pride and acclaim to millions of African-Americans and others of goodwill throughout our nation. His accomplishments were profiled in the December 22, 1966 edition of *Jet* magazine who described him this way, "David R. Reed, 25, the 'New Breed' Republican who challenged Congressman William L. Dawson on Chicago's South Side was one of the first five

people Richard V. Ogilvie, newly elected President of the Cook County Board, appointed to his administrative team. Reed, a native Chicagoan and former Drake University basketball star, was named an administrative assistant in the President's office. . . The members of the New Breed are mostly young, militant Negroes who are college graduates and many are Vietnam Veterans." From 1967 to 1971, David worked as a chief administrative aide to Ogilvie during his tenure as President of the Cook County Board and, later, during his statewide run for Illinois Governor.

In the 1970s, David returned to the Democratic Party and was active, for years, in progressive grassroots politics. David went on to play a leading role in helping to elect Chicago's first African-American Mayor, Harold Washington, in 1983. After the Mayor's death in 1987, David became chair of the Harold Washington Party where, for years, he worked tirelessly to help other African-American candidates reach their political dreams.

By the mid-1970s, David left government and launched a string of successful entrepreneurial pursuits—it was a level of work and success that would span four decades. Most of those businesses were based in Chicago and focused on various industries including a restaurant (Seafood Safari), a skating rink (Rolla World), a security agency (Best Security) and other business interests in real estate and construction. Over the years, David's consulting practice grew and he served several leading clients and companies throughout metro Atlanta, where he spent the latter part of his life.

With all that David meant to Chicago, the state of Illinois, our nation, and especially my wife, Carolyn, and I, he was so much more. He and his adoring wife, Judith, were life-long friends and adoring life partners. David and his wife, who was his high school sweetheart, led a life of passion, joy, service, and style that set an example for our nation. Over the years that I got to know him in Chicago, David remained a very dear friend. The two of us, and our wives, shared many joyous moments, and a few sorrows, along the path of life we walked together. I can truly say that the love and devotion David and Judy shared is a classic American love story that, in and of itself, is worthy of acclaim.

David was a tremendous inspiration to me, not only because of his brilliance and political skills but because of the way he carried himself. He was comfortable speaking truth to power but he did it with dignity, class, and in a way that made me, and generations of African-American men and women like me, so very, very proud.

In addition to his wife, Judy, David's legacy endures through their two children, Karren Grant who lives in Atlanta, Georgia, and David Reed, Jr., who currently resides in Denver, Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a grateful city, state and nation, it is my privilege to enter into our nation's permanent record the inspired life story of my friend, David Ronald Reed, Sr., a man whose contributions to our nation are worthy of recognition. May his soul rest in peace. And, as I close, I want Judy and his children to know that they will always have the love and support of Carolyn and me as well as a large and loving extended family in Chicago, and the State of Illinois, whose lives they so magnificently touched. May God bless all of you.